

Message Text

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62

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO USDOC WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 588

UNCLAS CARACAS 10896

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: BTRA VA
SUBJ: SUSPENSION OF "TOURIST CARD"ENTRY PRIVILEGES

1. THE VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT HAS ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO SUSPEND THE PRACTICE OF ISSUING TOURIST CARDS THROUGH THE ARLINES AT MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS. THESE CARDS WERE VALID FOR A THIRTY-DAY STAY AND WERE ISSUED TO TRAVELLERS TO ENABLE THEM TO AVOID DIRECT VISA REQUESTS THROUGH VENEZUELAN CONSULATES.

2. ASIDE FROM THE DAMPENING EFFECT THIS MEASURE MIGHT HAVE ON TOURIST TRADE, EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT MIGHT ALSO HAVE POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME CONSEQUENCES FOR BUSINESS TRAVELLERS WHO INDICATE THE BUSINESS PURPOSE OF THEIR TRIP TO VENEZUELA TO CONSULAR OFFICIALS WHO WILL THEN ISSUE A BUSINESS VISA. BUSINESS VISAS REQUIRE THAT INCOME TAX EXONERATIONS, OR CERTIFICATIONS OF THE PAYMENT OF TAX LIABILITY RESULTING FROM INCOME EARNED WHILE IN VENEZUELA BE OBTAINED BEFORE LEAVING VENEZUELA.

3. AS THESE PROCEDURES MAY REQUIRE TWO OR THREE DAYS TO BE COMPLETED, AND HAVE BEEN A SOURCE OF TROUBLE FOR AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN AND TRADE MISSION MEMBERS, EMBASSY SUGGESTS THAT THE FOREGOING INFORMATION BE DISSEMINATED TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY THROUGH THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE, COMMERCE AND USDOC FIELD OFFICES, STRESSING THAT TOURIST VISAS MAY BE THE MOST CONVENIENT WAY TO VISIT VENEZUELA. IT MIGHT ALSO BE MENTIONED THAT THE EMBASSY

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HAS NO WAY OF ASSISTING BUSINESS VISA TRAVELERS IN

OBTAINING EXIT PERMITS.
SHLAUDEMAM

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